

COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION/INFORMATION SYSTEMS

May 15, 2001

5:15 PM

Chairman Gatsas called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Gatsas, Pariseau, Thibault, Hirschmann (late), and O'Neil

Messrs: S. Tellier, F. Rusczech

Chairman Gatsas stated we are going to take up Item 3 last.

Chairman Gatsas addressed Item 5 of the agenda:

Copy of a communication from the City Clerk's Office to Mr. Harris
requesting an appearance before the committee regarding Riverfest issues.

On motion of Alderman Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman Thibault, it was
voted to receive and file this item.

Alderman O'Neil asked are we all set with this so they can get on with trying to do
Riverfest.

Chairman Gatsas stated I would think that they should go on and do the best job
that they can do with Riverfest and maybe once Riverfest is completed this
Committee can ask them to come back in and we can get a thorough analysis of
where they stand.

Chairman Gatsas addressed Item 6 of the agenda:

Communication from Donna McMahon of the Royal Palace Circus
requesting a circus permit for Friday, June 8, 2001 at the JFK Coliseum.

On motion of Alderman O'Neil, duly seconded by Alderman Thibault, it was voted
to approve the request.

Chairman Gatsas addressed Item 7 of the agenda:

Communication from Jennifer Mercier of The Black Brimmer seeking

permission to sell food in front of the restaurant between the hours of 9:00 PM until 2:00 AM.

Alderman O'Neil asked, Matt, she is not employed by The Black Brimmer but she does have permission...it is a hot dog type thing.

Deputy Clerk Normand answered yes she has permission and she has been granted an extension of those hours in the past two years by this Committee.

Alderman Thibault asked is that the same person that was there before.

Deputy Clerk Normand answered yes.

On motion of Alderman O'Neil, duly seconded by Alderman Pariseau, it was voted to approve the request.

Chairman Gatsas addressed Item 8 of the agenda:

Communication from Brian Tremblay of the Boys & Girls Club requesting waiver of the \$200.00 fair license permit fee for their Annual Classic Car Show to be held on Sunday, June 10, 2001 from 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM at Dobles Chevrolet.

Alderman Thibault asked what did we do last year.

Deputy Clerk Normand answered the Board voted to make a civic contribution of \$200 to the Boys & Girls Club.

Alderman O'Neil asked should we refer this to the Finance Committee.

Alderman Thibault stated I think it is a great event.

Deputy Clerk Normand stated what happened last year was it was denied as a waiver of the ordinances that are now in place and I believe they took it out of contingency as a civic donation.

Alderman O'Neil asked should we refer this to Finance or the full Board.

On motion of Alderman Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman O'Neil, it was voted to deny the waiver.

On motion of Alderman O'Neil, duly seconded by Alderman Thibault, it was voted to recommend that a civic contribution of \$200 be made to the Boys & Girls Club to cover the business license fee.

Chairman Gatsas addressed Item 9 of the agenda:

Communication from Alderman Sysyn regarding Elderly Tax Exemption.

Alderman Pariseau stated this request was to see if we could increase the elderly tax exemption.

Mr. Tellier stated my understanding of this letter is to bring to the forefront the fact that the elderly are always in need of help and the elderly exemption as provided by statute will definitely have to be looked at in lieu of the city wide revaluation that is occurring. However, at this time we feel that it is premature to actually make any sort of recommendation on numbers as the revaluation firm is currently undergoing the valuation phase. We anticipate final values and notices to taxpayers to go out in the latter part of June with the third and fourth week of July and the first couple of weeks of August being hearings. With that being said, right now we don't have an actual idea on the percentage of increase, which could be used as an average. We will probably have that in the upcoming six to eight weeks.

Alderman O'Neil asked so in that time period you are going to be in a position to report back to the Committee with a recommendation.

Mr. Tellier answered absolutely. I suspect that what we will do, unless we have alternative direction from this Board, we will come up with recommendations to preserve the status quo and should the Board of Mayor and Aldermen or individual Aldermen have their own thoughts to either increase the exemption amount or the income or any other portion or any variation of that, we would have to report back to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen on what that impact would be.

Chairman Gatsas stated hold on. We can't change this after the budget process. It affects revenue so you need to have this ready and come back to us with some sort of recommendations with parameters and dollars based on today's dollars because that is all we should be doing and not focusing on what the revaluation is.

Mr. Tellier replied that is correct.

Chairman Gatsas responded I am surprised that you didn't think of that.

Mr. Tellier replied I am remiss in that.

Chairman Gatsas stated I would like you to get back to this Committee or at least the full Board...when do you do your budget presentation.

Mr. Tellier replied May 23.

Chairman Gatsas stated by May 23 I would like to see you with a full presentation including a comparison of Nashua's numbers, the City's numbers and any other location in the state that does an elderly exemption. I should say at least our parameters or better. If Concord has a better step than we do, I would like to see those numbers.

Mr. Tellier replied the optional elderly adjusted statute, which is what we utilize here in Manchester, provides for any variation that this Board of Mayor wishes to adopt by ordinance. Those are the facts so what we would present...

Alderman Pariseau stated what can we do for people who always paid their taxes and are now over the income limit and have never been able to take advantage of the City's exemption. I have a gentleman who is calling me and advising me that he has never been to public schools and never took advantage of the City in that way and he has been paying his full share ever since.

Mr. Tellier replied regretfully we can't link the elderly exemption toward use of services in that context.

Chairman Gatsas stated I don't think that is what the Alderman is asking you for. I think he is asking you for a much more aggressive approach. To say that somebody who is 84 years old, just because you can't fall under the guidelines of almost poverty, you should be entitled to something. So, get an aggressive approach and come back on May 23 to the full Board.

Mr. Tellier responded we will return with some information of the larger communities, the ones that have a much more benevolent program with the impact to their budget and what it would convert to in Manchester's scenario.

Chairman Gatsas replied and even one that may be more aggressive that you don't find out there.

Mr. Tellier asked how many different steps would you like to bring in because there are three components. There is the age, the amount of the exemption or the dollar value that is deducted from the home and there are the assets and income.

Chairman Gatsas answered let's take an age approach.

Mr. Tellier replied there has to be three tiers. That is limited by statute. Sixty-five to seventy-four; seventy-five to eighty and above.

Chairman Gatsas responded right so if you are at 80 years old you should be almost at 25% of total assessment.

Mr. Tellier asked do you want me to back it in that way.

Chairman Gatsas answered yes and see what that looks like.

On motion of Alderman O'Neil, duly seconded by Alderman Thibault, it was voted to refer this item to budget discussions with the Assessor's Office on May 23.

TABLED ITEM

10. Communication from Alderman Levasseur seeking a change in the City's Ordinances relative to raising the penalties/citations issued to those in violation of Section 150.060 Sanitation.

On motion of Alderman O'Neil, duly seconded by Alderman Thibault, it was voted to remove this item from the table.

Mr. Rusczek stated at this point I believe all there really is to report is that the representatives from each of the four departments have met, that there is sentiment for increasing the penalties and citations that are given in the form of a ticket and that some of the language and some of the amounts have to be looked at and finessed.

Alderman O'Neil asked who would the fourth department be.

Mr. Rusczek answered Fire.

Alderman O'Neil stated one of the things was I hoped you would come up with besides actual dollar amounts and that is creating a system where...I don't know who currently...each individual department can only cite for a very specific problem is that correct. Maybe we can do it by ordinance to broaden it a little bit. I don't know if we would need a change in the statute, but if there is a way within changing ordinances so that if a Health Inspector comes upon a situation that he or she doesn't necessarily have to look if they are called because of a health situation they can look at other parts of this and say...or somebody from the Building Department or somebody from the Highway Department or even...I know a lot of the complaints that I have received over the years seem to come up on weekends.

They put trash out on Friday nights and unfortunately your departments aren't on duty but even a police officer could cite them if he or she observed something. Just broaden it to give it a little more teeth.

Alderman Pariseau stated they don't cite anybody anyway.

Alderman O'Neil stated I don't know if going beyond the four departments with maybe a little bit of input from the police because they do the odd hours and weekends and that...it just strengthens it a little bit and I think the departments have been great at responding but if we can get maybe a little proactive and make it so that if one department goes out they may be able to address all of the issues with regards to trash and not have to say well wait a minute that is Highway's jurisdiction or that is Building or that is Health.

Alderman Pariseau stated if somebody from Building observes something, they should have the power to address that. I have a problem with appliances out on the curb. How do we eliminate that? I know there is a charge of \$20 per appliance and people aren't paying the \$20 and just throwing them out on the sidewalk. What can we do? In fact there are two appliances out on Calef Road as I speak and I happened to call the other day and found out that there is a \$20 charge per unit and I think we are going to have a lot more of that stuff on the curb because of that exorbitant price tag. I don't know if there is a fine built into any ordinance relative to that.

Mr. Rusczek replied I would have to check on that with the Highway Department. One of the other things that I believe needs to occur is that we need to go back to the policies and procedures that were established in the 1980's when the ticketing ordinance was enacted and update that and review it with our City Solicitor's Office to make sure that all of the departments are still employing policies that are consistent and to see if there is an opportunity to broaden the authority for ticketing as has been requested.

Alderman Thibault stated I believe that this is what I was trying to allude to the other night. Because of the way this ordinance is a lot of these things are being thrown on the roadside. If you take my area next to the froggy pond area, I send Highway there three or four times a week to pick up refrigerators, air conditioners, stoves, etc. Because of the \$20 charge, these people are going to go to an area where they are not going to be seen and they are going to throw it out there. So who ends up picking it up then? I would think that the City would try to devise a way that if you call the City and they don't pick it up...I am sorry if you call the City and tell them that you have a refrigerator in front of your house, they should pick it up and if they don't call, then you should try to charge them. I think if we let the people know that this is going to be a law now and if they call it will be

picked up free and if they don't call they will be charged...there has to be a way. Maybe that is not the right way but there is a problem there because any rural area that I have in my ward I end up with three or four refrigerators a day or freezers or whatever and I have to eventually call Frank and ask him to pick it up. They have to pick it up for nothing at that point. What are we doing here? We are working against ourselves in my opinion and I don't know if I have the exact answer but there has to be an answer as to how we take care of all of these refrigerators, freezers, air conditioners, stoves and couches. You go by a house and you see a couch and two chairs. Well if nobody calls the Highway Department how do you expect them to pick it up? They don't even know about it. If there was a way that if they call then maybe it absolves the person from having to pay. Maybe there is a way of doing that. I don't know what the actual way is, but that is what I was trying to allude to at the Board meeting a few weeks ago. Maybe I didn't make it clear then.

Alderman O'Neil stated I think the departments understand where we would like to go. I know that through the Highway Department I have seen some pictures...this seems to be getting more common when people move out it is unbelievable what they leave on the side of the road. I think you understand where we are coming from and I am sure you are going to come back with good recommendations. Put some teeth in it and see if there is a way to work the jurisdiction situation out.

Chairman Gatsas asked when are you going to report back by.

Mr. Rusczek answered we will work in earnest to complete a report hopefully within a month or by your next meeting.

Chairman Gatsas asked by July 1.

Mr. Rusczek answered yes.

Alderman O'Neil asked do you see bringing in a draft first and then having some revisions to it or are you hopeful to have a final document.

Mr. Rusczek answered the way I would envision it and there are other departments involved but it would be a report on the situation and some of the issues related to enforcement and a draft of what might be the solutions.

On motion of Alderman O'Neil, duly seconded by Alderman Thibault, it was voted to put this item back on the table and have Mr. Rusczek come back with a report by July 1.

On motion of Alderman Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman O'Neil, it was voted to enter non-public session under the provisions of RSA 91-A:3 II(c). A roll call vote was taken. Everyone present voted yea and the motion carried.

Non-public session ensued with Mr. Markwith, the operator; Mr. Normand, Deputy Clerk of Licensing and Facilities; Deputy Solicitor Thomas Arnold; committee members and the Clerk present. The reasons for the denial were discussed by Mr. Normand. Mr. Markwith presented his comments.

On motion of Alderman Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman O'Neil, it was voted to re-enter public session.

On motion of Alderman O'Neil duly seconded by Alderman Pariseau, it was voted to table the appeal pending further investigation by the City Clerk's Office and the City Solicitor.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion of Alderman Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman Thibault, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee